



Designation: A800/A800M – 14

Standard Practice for Steel Casting, Austenitic Alloy, Estimating Ferrite Content Thereof¹

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1. Scope*

1.1 This practice covers procedures and definitions for estimating ferrite content in certain grades of austenitic iron-chromium-nickel alloy castings that have compositions balanced to create the formation of ferrite as a second phase in amounts controlled to be within specified limits. Methods are described for estimating ferrite content by chemical, magnetic, and metallographic means.

1.2 The grades covered by this practice are: CF-3, CF-3A, CF-8, CF-8A, CF-3M, CF-3MA, CF-8M, CF-8C, CG-8M, and CH-10.

1.3 The values stated in either inch-pound units or SI units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system are not exact equivalents; therefore, each system must be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in nonconformance with the practice.

1.3.1 Within the text, the SI units are shown in brackets.

1.4 *This standard does not purport to address the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

[A351/A351M Specification for Castings, Austenitic, for Pressure-Containing Parts](#)

[A751 Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology for Chemical Analysis of Steel Products](#)

[A799/A799M Practice for Steel Castings, Stainless, Instrument Calibration, for Estimating Ferrite Content](#)

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee A01 on Steel, Stainless Steel and Related Alloys and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee A01.18 on Castings.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

[A941 Terminology Relating to Steel, Stainless Steel, Related Alloys, and Ferrous Alloys](#)

[A1067/A1067M Specification for Test Coupons for Steel Castings](#)

[E353 Test Methods for Chemical Analysis of Stainless, Heat-Resisting, Maraging, and Other Similar Chromium-Nickel-Iron Alloys](#)

[E562 Test Method for Determining Volume Fraction by Systematic Manual Point Count](#)

2.2 *Constitution Diagrams:*

[Schoefer Diagram for Estimating Ferrite Content of Stainless Steel Castings \(1980 revision\)](#)³

[Schaeffler Diagram for Estimating Ferrite Content of Stainless Steel Weld Metal](#)⁴

[DeLong Diagram for Estimating Ferrite Content of Stainless Steel Weld Metal](#)⁵

2.3 *American Welding Society Specification:*

[AWS A 4.2, Procedures for Calibrating Magnetic Instruments to Measure the Delta Ferrite Content of Austenitic Stainless Steel Weld Metal](#)⁶

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions:*

3.1.1 *ferrite*—the ferromagnetic, body-centered, cubic-microstructural constituent of variable chemical composition in iron-chromium-nickel alloys. This may be formed upon solidification from the molten metal (delta ferrite) or by transformation from austenite or sigma phase on cooling in the solid state (alpha ferrite).

3.1.2 *ferrite content*—the proportion of total volume of an iron-chromium-nickel alloy present as the ferrite phase.

3.1.3 *ferrite number*—the ferrite content expressed as an arbitrary number based on the magnetic response of the alloy in a weld deposit.

³ Appendix of this practice.

⁴ *Metal Progress Data Book*, American Society for Metals, Mid June 1977, p. 161.

⁵ *Welding Journal*, American Welding Society, Vol 38, No. 7, July 1973, p. 293–s.

⁶ Available from American Welding Society (AWS), 8669 NW 36 Street, #130, Miami, FL 33166-6672, <http://www.aws.org>.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

3.1.4 *ferrite percentage*—the ferrite content expressed as a volume percent.

3.1.5 *heat treatment*—the definitions in Terminology A941 are applicable to this practice.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 The tensile and impact properties, the weldability, and the corrosion resistance of iron-chromium-nickel alloy castings may be influenced beneficially or detrimentally by the ratio of the amount of ferrite to the amount of austenite in the microstructure. The ferrite content may be limited by purchase order requirements or by the design construction codes governing the equipment in which the castings will be used. The quantity of ferrite in the structure is fundamentally a function of the chemical composition of the alloy and its thermal history. Because of segregation, the chemical composition, and, therefore, the ferrite content, may differ from point to point on a casting. Determination of the ferrite content by any of the procedures described in the following practice is subject to varying degrees of imprecision which must be recognized in setting realistic limits on the range of ferrite content specified. Sources of error include the following:

4.1.1 *In Determinations from Chemical Composition*—Deviations from the actual quantity of each element present in an alloy because of chemical analysis variance, although possibly minor in each case, can result in substantial difference in the ratio of total ferrite-promoting to total austenite-promoting elements. Therefore, the precision of the ferrite content estimated from chemical composition depends on the accuracy of the chemical analysis procedure.

4.1.2 *In Determinations from Magnetic Response*—Phases other than ferrite and austenite may be formed at certain temperatures and persist at room temperature. These may so alter the magnetic response of the alloy that the indicated ferrite content is quite different from that of the same chemical composition that has undergone different thermal treatment. Also, because the magnets or probes of the various measuring instruments are small, different degrees of surface roughness or surface curvature will vary the magnetic linkage with the material being measured.

4.1.3 *In Determinations from Metallographic Examination*—Metallographic point count estimates of ferrite percentage may vary with the etching technique used for identification of the ferrite phase and with the number of grid points chosen for the examination, as explained in Test Method E562.

4.2 The estimation of ferrite percent by chemical composition offers the most useful and most common method of ferrite control during melting of the metal.

4.3 For most accurate estimate of ferrite percent, a quantitative metallographic method should be used.

5. Ordering Information

5.1 Orders for material to this practice should include the following as required:

5.1.1 Applicable ASTM product specification or other document covering product requirements,

5.1.2 Alloy grade,

5.1.3 Required ferrite content range, in volume percent, of the castings after final heat treatment. Also, if desired by the purchaser, required ferrite content range, in ferrite number, for weld deposits (Note 1) as deposited, and

5.1.4 Supplementary requirements, if any, desired.

NOTE 1—There may be a substantial decrease in the ferrite content of weld deposits after solution heat treatment in comparison with the as-deposited value.

6. General Caution

6.1 In specifying ferrite content as required in 5.1.3, the purchaser should not set limits that conflict with applicable material specification requirements: for example, a maximum limit of 10 % ferrite for Grade CF-3A in Specification A351/A351M for which the minimum tensile strength requirement is 77 ksi [530 MPa].

6.2 When Supplementary Requirement S1 is specified, the purchaser should set ferrite content limits that are compatible with the measuring instrument to be used.

7. Estimation of Ferrite Content

7.1 Estimation in the base metal of the casting by chemical composition in accordance with the Schoefer diagram (see Appendix X1):

7.1.1 A chemical analysis of the heat from which the castings are poured shall include the following elements whether or not required by the chemical requirements of the product specification: carbon, manganese, silicon, chromium, nickel, molybdenum, columbium, and nitrogen.

7.1.1.1 Upon written agreement between the purchaser and the producer, an estimated nitrogen content may be reported instead of an amount determined by analysis of the specific heat if actual chemical analyses have been made for nitrogen in a sufficient number of heats of the same alloy type, produced by the same melting practice, to establish the average nitrogen content to be expected.

7.1.2 The ferrite content of the casting shall be estimated from the central line of the diagram at the composition ratio of “chromium equivalent” (Cr_e) to “nickel equivalent” (Ni_e) determined from the following formula:

$$\frac{Cr(\%) + 1.5Si(\%) + 1.4Mo(\%) + Cb(\%) - 4.99}{Ni(\%) + 30C(\%) + 0.5Mn(\%) + 26(N - 0.02\%) + 2.77} = \frac{Cr_e}{Ni_e}$$

7.1.3 When a product analysis is made by the purchaser, it shall include the elements listed in 7.1.1. If a comparison is made of ferrite content estimated from a product analysis performed by the purchaser, with that estimated from the heat analysis (see 7.1.1), the reproducibility data in the precision statements of Test Methods E353 shall be used as a guide.

7.1.3.1 Test Methods A751 or Test Methods E353, as applicable, shall be used as referee chemical analysis methods.

7.2 Estimation in weld deposits by chemical composition in accordance with the Schaeffler or DeLong diagrams:

7.2.1 The ferrite content shall be estimated (a) from the deposit chemical analysis included on the electrode manufacturer’s certified material test report, or (b) from chemical analysis of a weld deposit pad made by the casting manufacturer.

7.3 Estimation of ferrite content in heat, product, or weld metal may be made by the magnetic response or metallographic methods by imposition of Supplementary Requirements S1 or S2, respectively.

8. Acceptance Standards

8.1 Conformance with the required ferrite content range specified in 5.1.3 as indicated by the estimation procedure of 7.1 and 7.2 shall be the basis for acceptance of material supplied under this practice unless other methods of estimation are ordered as supplementary requirements, in which case the supplementary requirement shall be the basis of acceptance.

8.2 If lack of conformance with the ferrite content range specified in 5.1.3 is indicated by a product analysis made by the purchaser (7.1.3) and by a referee analysis as provided in 7.1.3.1, rejection of material shall be subject to the tests of 7.3 as established by written agreement between the manufacturer and the purchaser.

9. Certification

9.1 The manufacturer's certification shall be furnished to the purchaser stating that the material was sampled and tested in accordance with the specification (including year date) and was found to meet the requirements.

9.2 The test report shall contain the results of the actual chemical analyses required by 7.1.1 and 7.2.1 and the indicated ferrite content range.

9.3 The test report shall be signed by an authorized agent of the manufacturer.

9.4 The test report shall be furnished within five working days of shipment of the castings.

10. Keywords

10.1 austenite; austenitic stainless steel; ferrite; Schoefer Diagram; steel castings

SUPPLEMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

The following supplementary requirements are for use when desired by the purchaser. They shall not apply unless specified in the order, in which event the specified methods of ferrite content estimation shall be employed by the manufacturer before shipment of the castings.

S1. Estimation of Ferrite Content by Measurement of Magnetic Response

S1.1 The ferrite content of the heat from which the castings are poured shall be estimated from measurements made by primary or secondary instruments calibrated in accordance with the requirements of Practice A799/A799M. All measurements shall be made on material after the solution heat treatment required by the applicable product specification, or, if any subsequent solution heat treatment is employed, then after the final solution heat treatment.

S1.1.1 Location of measurements—base metal:

S1.1.1.1 Measurements shall be made on the unstrained ends of tension test specimens from the same heat as the castings represented. Measurements may be made either before or after performance of the tension test. If a tension test is not required by the applicable product specification, measurements may be made on a specimen cut from any of the coupons shown in Test Coupons for Steel Castings A1067/A1067M, except for Fig. 3, or on one of the castings.

S1.1.1.2 When further specified, measurements shall be made on the base metal of the castings, or a specified sample of castings (*not* on weld repairs or other weld deposits), in locations designated on the design drawing or as otherwise agreed in writing between the purchaser and the manufacturer.

S1.2 The ferrite content of weld deposits shall be estimated from measurements made by primary or secondary instruments calibrated in accordance with the requirements of Specification AWS A4.2. All measurements shall be made on weld deposits as deposited.

S1.2.1 Location of measurements—weld deposits:

S1.2.1.1 Measurements shall be made on a weld pad deposited in accordance with the electrode specification.

S1.2.1.2 When further specified, measurements shall be made on repair or fabrication welds on castings in locations as agreed in writing between the purchaser and manufacturer.

S1.3 *Number of Measurements*—Six measurements shall be made at random in each designated location. For instruments having probes making two contacts with the surface being measured, a “measurement” shall consist of a pair of readings taken with the probe oriented on perpendicular axes.

S1.4 Surface Condition:

S1.4.1 The instrument magnet or probe and the surface to be measured shall be dry and cleaned prior to testing to remove any scale, grease, lint, or dirt that could affect the accuracy of measurement.

S1.4.2 Measurements shall be made more than 0.25 in. [6.350 mm] from the edge of a surface. When measurements are made on a curved surface the radius of curvature must be greater than 0.375 in. [9.525 mm].

S1.5 Acceptance Criteria:

S1.5.1 The average of the ferrite contents estimated from measurements in each designated location shall be within the limits stated in the order, and not more than two individual measurements shall indicate ferrite contents less than or in excess of these limits.

S1.5.1.1 If ferrite contents are estimated with an instrument that indicates for each measurement a value between an upper and a lower limit, more than one-half of all measurements shall be within the limits stated in the order.